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A Study of the Local Church

BY

FREDERICK A. AGAR

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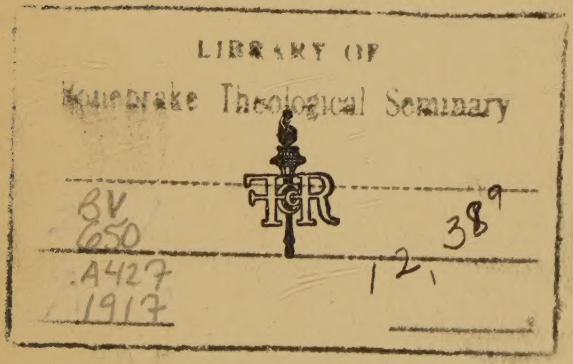
"Help Those Women," "Church Finance," "Personality and Possessions," etc.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TO

Frank W. Padelford

THE FRIEND

WHOSE HELP MADE POSSIBLE THIS

AND OTHER VOLUMES

PREFACE

THE church of Jesus Christ is the most potent force for righteousness in the world today. There is no other organization like it. Of divine origin, it is planted in the world to bring in the Kingdom of God and to establish the universal reign of Christ.

The primary business of this church of Christ is service. Its mission is to express in vital human life the loving winsomeness of a mighty Saviour. While a great many of its members have realized this divine purpose and are expressing it most beautifully and effectively in their lives, yet far too many have conceived of the church as a formal institution in which recognition, social fellowship and future salvation may be secured at small cost. When this latter class becomes at all numerous in any local unit of the church, the condition becomes perilous. Those who understand the situation and have the interests of the church at heart realize that we can not afford to be blind to the failings of these local

bodies. Their character will seriously affect the success of the whole enterprise.

The number of these inefficient units is surprisingly large. To one who makes a careful investigation they are disappointingly so. It is time to face the facts and to face them frankly. We cannot afford to close our eyes to many symptoms of the present hour. We must understand that we may act intelligently. This book is an attempt at constructive criticism of the whole fabric of the local organization, from a point of most friendly interest. We shall study that we may know and that we may build.

It is hoped that this presentation may help many local churches to see themselves more clearly in the light of their own powers and possibilities and enable them to produce more of the fruits anticipated by the great Founder. This will be possible, however, only when the organization is militant and missionary, rather than selfish and self-satisfied. If the church with all its present weaknesses can occupy the place of power it does in the world today, what a mighty force it could be if it became an efficient militant order with a standard of life and practice consonant with the principles and aims of its Founder!

With the hope that it may contribute some-

thing toward the attainment of this end, this book is sent forth upon its mission. The facts and statistics presented herein have been gathered in long and painstaking investigations covering thousands of churches in all parts of America.

F. A. A.

New York City.

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I

PRESENT CONDITIONS IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

THE church of Christ is a divine institution, entrusted with divine means to secure certain great definite ends. Its foundations were laid by Jesus who gathered about himself a small band of kindred spirits to whom he might impart his ideals and purposes and to whom he might intrust the fulfillment of his mission when his career should come to an end. Into the hearts and lives of these people he breathed his own contagious spirit and they became the nucleus of an ever enlarging body of men and women called out by the Spirit of God. The mission of this body has always been the perpetuation of the mission of their Founder, namely the revelation to men of the heart of God, the persuasion of men to live in fellowship with God, and the establishment among men of a state of society in which the principles of love and righteousness should reign supreme. For the accomplishment of this purpose the church has been entrusted with the Keys of the Kingdom and

the Sword of the Spirit, the mightiest instruments in the hands of man.

Is the church succeeding at her task? This is a question not only full of interest but of vital import both to the church and to the world. The complacent answer has been that of course she is succeeding. Could we not trace a gradual evolution of the world toward righteousness? But when in August, 1914, we were rudely shaken out of ourselves and compelled to face the old facts anew, men began to ask that question with a new interest and with a deal more doubt.

Not for a generation have men asked this question with so much seriousness or earnestness. The world is deeply concerned about it, more than would sometimes appear. It recognizes that the church is the one institution for leavening the world with righteousness. Is it really succeeding? If not what is the reason? If it is, why is not its success more marked? No one would question but that the world has come a long way since the time of Jesus and most people would grant that much of the credit belongs to the church. But has the church really fulfilled the expectations of Jesus? Has it exercised that transforming influence in the life of the world of which Jesus spoke so clearly when he laid its foundations?

Religion is vitally related to life, and true religion can in no way be separated from it. At this point there is much confusion of thought. In the minds of many people religion has but little to do with life. By many it is regarded as a profession of belief or faith; by others as a formal relation to an organization. Owing to a failure to understand what real religion is many have supposed that when they have avowed their faith in a certain creed or have been baptized into the church, the whole business was done and they had become religious. They have never apprehended the central fact that *religion is life*. Upon this central fact the New Testament places constant emphasis. The failure to grasp this fact on the part of so many who are nominally connected with the church accounts for many of the difficulties which the church has experienced.

Being life religion is bound to express itself constantly. Where there is no expression evident there is no real religion existent. The important question therefore is, what are the normal expressions of the religious life? There are several of these to which we must refer.

The first thing we note is that the religious life should normally express itself in worship.

This is not because it is commanded by some being with higher power but because it is natural. It is none other than natural that one who is possessed of the religious life should live in regular and constant fellowship with God. This is a habit, moreover, which is essential to all health, growth and development.

But what is the habit of the members of the church with respect to public worship? When we face the facts what do we find? Investigation covering a wide area and including a large number of churches, carefully and systematically made, reveals the fact that less than half the membership in any average local church attend with any regularity the morning services of Sabbath worship. The situation at the evening service is even more serious for less than twenty per cent of the membership of the average church attend the second service and of those who do fully sixty per cent were among the morning worshipers. Repeaters! In politics repeaters are outlaws, but in the church blessed are the repeaters for there are very few of them. There are few churches which are not struggling with the problem of maintaining an evening service and many have been forced to forego it altogether.

The church that counts twenty per cent of its members at the mid-week service of worship is

a rare exception and seldom are twenty-five per cent enrolled as members of the Bible School, while only forty per cent of the young people attend the young people's services.

Experience has demonstrated not only that worship is a natural expression of a religious life but that it is also essential to the development of a vital and fruitful spiritual life. When therefore we find such a large percentage of the members of the church who have no regular habits of worship we have certainly discovered one of the primary causes of the weakness of the modern church. And what is even more serious, it must be apparent to thoughtful observers that this evil is decidedly on the increase. The number of church members who are becoming careless in this matter is increasing year by year. The advent of the automobile, the development of week-end holidays, and other innovations of modern life are playing havoc with the habits of worship of our church members. The situation is much more serious than many of us have realized. If this development goes on at its present pace the results will be much more serious than we can now forecast. It is impossible to develop a strong Christian church when such a large percentage of its members disregard the importance of this fundamental habit of worship.

It is to be feared that many if not most of our churches have no accurate information regarding the habits of worship of their members, and make no systematic effort to maintain and stimulate their interest and activity. An usher for the gratification of the minister or the officers often counts the number of persons present at the services of worship, but this count gives no information regarding the individual members and furnishes no data for following up the absentees. If the minister notes continuous absence he may call or make inquiry. But the fact is that a very small per cent of our churches make a systematic effort to follow up the habits of worship of their members.

In an efficient church this matter receives constant and earnest attention. The usher not only counts the number who are present but he makes notes as to who are present and who absent, and his report is the basis for the parish work of the week. Inquiry is made as to the cause of absences and if these are in any sense persistent the members are visited promptly by the representatives of the church. Members are not allowed to absent themselves for weeks without attention. They are looked up promptly.

If this custom was followed in all our

churches the number of delinquent members would be reduced to a minimum and the attendance at the services would be greatly stimulated. The great difficulty at present is that most churches have no standards of attendance which they expect their members to meet, and hence no efforts are made to keep members to a standard. This is one of the subjects requiring prompt and efficient attention in a large number of our churches. This habit of non-attendance can be corrected if the church itself will set the standard and then in a careful, persistent, persuasive manner follow up the members. We can revolutionize this matter of church attendance in a decade if our churches will take seriously this problem of worship.

If the church would give to its members a clear comprehension of what worship really is and means the problem could be more easily solved. To the ordinary attendant worship means little more than listening to a sermon. The Protestant church has seriously failed to make its people realize that worship is anything more than this. The emphasis has been put on the sermon to the disparagement of that part of the service in which the people enter into the closest relation with God. The slovenly way in which the service of worship is con-

ducted, the reference by the minister to the 'preliminary exercises' as though the worship of the people was preliminary to anything he had to say, the conception given in a hundred different ways that the sermon is the important and central thing, the customary advertisement in the press of the subject of the sermon which the minister proposes to deliver, all these things have developed an entirely false idea of worship in the ordinary Protestant church and this false conception explains to no small degree the lack of appreciation on the part of the people of the importance of worship. When the church trains its people to see that worship is fellowship with God, communion with the Father, the giving of one's self to Him, we shall have less difficulty in convincing our members of its importance in their daily lives. Just so long as they think of worship as hearing a sermon, just so long will worship be robbed of its chief value and so long will the success of the church in attracting attendants depend on its ability to secure a popular preacher. When we cultivate the true conception of worship it will make little difference whether the church has a popular pulpit orator or not. And not until the church does cultivate this true conception will it have much success in developing the habit of regular

church attendance. The Protestant church needs a great revival of worship.

In the second place the normal religious life will manifest itself in definite service for the church and the Kingdom. Worship is the giving of the heart in adoration and fellowship to God. In Christian service a man gives of his time, strength and life to God. This is a subject about which in recent years there has been a great deal of talk and discussion. But as yet we have not succeeded in enlisting any considerable per cent of the membership in any regular and definite activities. By too many the church is still regarded merely as a haven of rest instead of a workshop. It ought to be both.

This is not to suggest that there is not a large amount of work being done by the Christian church. It does mean that the service is rendered by too small a proportion of the membership. Our investigations indicate that less than one-quarter of the members of the average local church are rendering any personal service in the interests of the world-wide Kingdom. Ten per cent of the members are frequently at work in the Sunday School in one capacity or another. Another ten per cent hold positions as officers and members of committees. In many churches there are also

others who are engaged in personal work with those who are not professing Christians.

But this accounts for only a small per cent of the total membership. In determining the exact situation of any church we have often made a chart of all the church activities and under each activity have listed the names of all who were engaged in any service. This chart reveals at a glance what a small proportion is really at work. It is usually found that one or more names occur several times. In one church we found a man who was occupying seven positions while seventy-nine per cent of the members were apparently doing nothing. Surely no one man can fill so many positions satisfactorily, and moreover he was assigned to tasks which should have been given to others, in this way securing greater efficiency and enlisting a larger number of the people in service.

The complaint is that there is nothing for members to do that is worth while doing. This is due in the first place to poor organization and in the second to a lack of perception of the large task of the church. When a church is properly organized there is no lack of activities. The difficulty in a well-organized church is rather to find enough people to do the work. There is more work that ought

to be done than the modern church can find strength or time to do, but a vast amount more would be accomplished than is now done in most churches if the organization were more efficient.

The unification of the church is essential to the accomplishment of the larger tasks and the enlistment of the whole group. Yet in a large number of our churches there is little sense of unity in the whole organism. The Sunday School for example is often, if not usually, a separate organization from the church, electing its own officers, financing its own work, outlining its own plans and these are not correlated with the other activities of the church. The Sunday School ought to be an integral part of the church. Its officers and teachers should be selected by the church, with regard to all the other activities of the organization. The Sunday School ought to be financed by the church and all the offerings of the school should go directly to the church itself for its work at home and abroad. The women's societies are also examples of the lack of unification of the church. The purposes of these societies are above question, but they are not related definitely to the life of the church. The single matter of their giving is sufficient illustration. The women collect their gifts in

their mite boxes and annual subscriptions and these have no relation whatever to the unified benevolence work of the church. The women should be recognized as a part of the church in their work and their giving and their gifts should form a part of the unified expense and missionary budget.

If the church could once secure this unification of its work and could assign to each member his distinct part of the whole we should not only unify the church as we can not do today but we should remove the burdens from the shoulders of those who are overloaded and we should enlist a very much larger number of the members in definite activities which would make their church-membership a real and vital thing to them.

The modern church has seriously overlooked one of the specific tasks which the Founder himself gave to it. We have seemingly forgotten that the first thing we are to do is to bear our personal witness for the gospel. The early disciples went everywhere proclaiming the Word. This was true not of the apostles merely but of the whole group of disciples. As they were scattered abroad they bore personal witness to the experience which they had had of the grace of God. That was the way the early church was multiplied. No

more effective method has ever been found to supplant it. The modern church has substituted the evangelist and the evangelistic campaign. Not that these may not have a place in the modern church, but when they supplant the divine method given by Jesus they not only fail to secure the largest results in the way of accessions but they rob the members of the most effective method for the development of their own characters in Christian grace and strength. Those who know the facts realize that this personal witness has been largely lost to the church, greatly to its detriment. If the church would renew this apostolic method of propagating the faith it would develop much more normally and extensively.

A careful examination of the statistics published in 1915-1916 reveals the fact that the church in America is securing one new profession of faith in Christ for every ten to eighteen members, according to the various communions. In Korea, on the other hand, the church averages one new profession for every two members. The comparison does not speak very favorably for this Christian land. The church in America much needs to revive this apostolic method of propagation.

The average church has much impressional

life but little expressional. There is much intensive cultivation which is profitless because it is not followed by entensive expression. The apostolic injunction that as we have opportunity we should do good to all men, but especially unto those of the household of faith, is perfectly sound psychologically. It is only as the Christian is doing good unto others that he himself grows in Christian grace.

The third expression of the religious life to which reference must be made is that of giving. We have already referred to the constant re-giving of the heart to God in worship, to the giving of time and strength to God in service. There must be coupled with these the giving of money which is the expression also of one's power and strength. That there should be so much misunderstanding about this matter in the church is strange indeed when the obligation is so clearly set forth in the New Testament. The only explanation is that the church has been recreant in explaining and teaching the members about the grace of giving. It is not merely that money is needed for the extension of the Kingdom, but the money is essential to the development of the grace of generosity which is one of the fundamental Christian virtues. The New Testament principle is that we belong to God with

all our possessions and are stewards of the treasures which he has entrusted to us. It is only as we make return of part of this to him that the grace of beneficence can be developed.

Despite this fundamental consideration not more than fifty per cent of the members of our churches are giving regularly to the support of the worship of the local church with which they are connected and less than thirty-three per cent are giving at all for the extension of the Kingdom beyond their own habitat. Moreover many who are contributing are giving not "the first fruits of all their increase" but what is left over after all other demands are met. This is scarcely in keeping with our instructions to lay by on the first day of each week as God has prospered us.

Much of the difficulty has been due to the lack of proper business methods within the church. Members are not informed of the needs of the church and the Kingdom. No careful effort has been made to lead new members to give when they have first come in to the church. They have been left to give in the loose collections, when present, as moved by their spirit or willingness. About ninety per cent of the income of the average church is from the regular weekly contributors of record. Ten per cent or less comes from the

collections. In other words fifty per cent of the members provide ninety per cent of the income. The other ten per cent comes from the other half of the church, from attendants who are not members and from visitors. Surely when this ten per cent is divided up among all these the fifty per cent of members thus involved can scarcely contend that they are giving either regularly, proportionately or justly.

Many of our members are losing beyond all computation in the development of their Christian lives and characters because they have never learned or are refusing to learn the importance of this matter of beneficence. We certainly need a revival of this grace also in most of our churches.

II

CAUSES AND CURE

IN the former chapter we have outlined some of the essential expressions of the true religious life and have indicated that these expressions are seriously lacking in the lives of many people who are enrolled as members of the Christian church. The failure to discover these natural expressions is a source of serious concern to those who are most interested in the welfare of the church. Their absence indicates the cause of the blight that has fallen upon the church and explains why the church has failed to fulfill more completely the expectations of the Founder. In this chapter we must address ourselves to the discovery of means whereby we may correct these conditions and restore the church to her rightful place in the world.

In a recent conversation two officers declared that their church carried upon its rolls over two thousand names and that in the past few years they had added over seventeen hundred new members, "but," continued they,

"we could not find a thousand of them today." Here was a church that had become engrossed in the passion to add new members. It styled itself "an evangelistic church" and prided itself upon its popularity with the people. Its ambition was for more members and still more. Either to gratify its own ambition or that of its minister, or both, it had gone on adding members utterly regardless of its obligation to them or of their welfare.

Without doubt Jesus expected his disciples to publish good news as fast and as far as they could, but there is a passion for numbers that is utterly godless. When a church has become so absorbed in adding new members that it fails to care for the members whom it has received it has misconceived its commission. It is no less than a crime to introduce new converts to the church and then utterly disregard their training and education. The church which follows such a policy is itself to blame for the low standard of membership which characterizes it. Many of these churches engrossed with the ambition for numbers would acknowledge, if they spoke the truth, that confession of faith and baptism are not always accompanied by the evidences of a regenerated and consecrated life. Not that we should hamper the spirit of evangelism in

any church, but no church should become so absorbed in the business of evangelism as to prevent it from giving the needed training and education to those whom it has evangelized. Its first duty is to those whom it has introduced into the Christian life.

When Jesus gave his commission to the church he gave it three distinct commands: the disciples were to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom, to witness the confession of faith by those who had accepted the message and to teach, to train and to educate those who became responsive to the truth. This last command is quite as important, quite as authoritative as either of the others. The church must reinstate this commandment in the Great Commission.

If the church were to give definite instruction as to the meaning and obligations of the Christian life before the converts were introduced into the membership of the church and when they were amenable to its instruction we should have a higher standard of membership and many less lapses.

In the mission field the custom differs decidedly from that at home. Converts are not received by the churches until they have had a long period of training, lasting often beyond a year or two years. In Korea no candidate

is received for membership until he can bring with him a convert whom he has won to the faith. Would it not be better if we followed something of this custom here at home? Would it not be better to have a thorough understanding before membership rather than misunderstanding after?

During babyhood there is a constant supervision of the child and careful training that sane and healthy habits may be established. There should be a period of supervision and nurture for every convert, no matter how mature he may be in years. He is a child in spiritual things. During the early days of the Christian life habits are formed that will determine the whole after career, and these habits should be formed under the direction and watchful care of the church.

The record of the Day of Pentecost must not be lost to sight. "And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they *continued* steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread and in prayers. And all that believed were together and had all things common. And they sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking

bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people."

Evidently there was some instruction of new converts in those days. They were taught the principles of Jesus so thoroughly that it was the normal practice to pray, to worship, to give and to minister to one another.

There should be existent in every church a class in which new converts are carefully trained in all the essentials of the Christian life. Many churches now conduct such classes at definite periods for young children who are encouraged to go forward for membership but as a rule these classes are too short-lived and terminate soon after the children are received into the church. No such provision is made however for the adults who come, under the supposition probably that no such instruction is needed. But the experience of the church should have been sufficient by this time to prove that every new member needs this training for the Christian life.

This instruction should be sufficiently broad to include a thorough knowledge of the fundamental principles of the Christian faith, the obligations of the Christian life, the doc-

trines of the church with which the convert is to unite, some history of the church and missions, the aims and purposes of the denomination of which he is to become a part. None of these things are foreign to an efficient church member. Yet what proportion of the members of an average church possess any definite knowledge whatever of these important matters? We can never have an efficient church until this education is given to all our people. The church must partake of the character of a school if it would secure effective service.

The church must also present to itself and to the world a definite standard of life and service. The local church has today no recognized standard of Christian living which it requires of its membership. It sets up a standard, to be sure, in its discipline, confession, covenant or articles of faith to which it secures assent upon the candidate's entrance; but it promptly says to the novitiate by the lives of its own members that it does not expect the new convert to live up to the standard and will never hold him to the standard. It says this distinctly by its tacit and unrebuked condonation of failure. For example, every member upon admittance to the church assumes the obligation to give

cheerfully and regularly for the support of the gospel at home and abroad. Yet as we have already indicated less than fifty per cent of the members give for the support of their own local church and less than thirty-three per cent for the spread of the gospel beyond their own borders. Yet whoever heard of a member being disciplined for failure to keep this obligation? The church exacts a promise of the new member to attend all the regular services of the church constantly yet it is only after long and gross negligence that members are taken to task for failure to meet this standard.

In other words, while the church pretends to have a standard of life and conduct it makes no pretension of demanding the standard at the hands of its members.

If we are ever going to have an efficient church which will have conquering power this situation must be changed. The church must regard its standard as something more than a mere verbal form. It must require recognition of that standard in the lives of all its people. We have no desire to return to the standards of the Puritans nor to their methods of church discipline, and there is little danger that we shall. But the modern church would have a healthier life if it took its own stand-

ards more seriously and by its actions declared its expectations of its new members.

If the modern church would become efficient it must make a much more determined and systematic effort to care for the welfare of its members. The negligence of many churches in this respect is amazing to the careful investigator and would be to anyone who looked into the facts intimately. We have discovered instances where the church roll contained the names of members who had been dead for twenty years, of those who had become members and officers of other churches a scorce of years before, of those who had removed from the community years ago and had been completely lost to any knowledge, of women who had been married for years but their names had never been changed nor their residences secured. In one church of nine hundred members we discovered in an every-member canvass over one hundred and fifty who confessed that they had not been inside their church building for years.

Such investigations reveal the fact that many churches have no systematic method of keeping trace of their members or of following them up, of investigating the causes of their absenteeism, of caring for those who are ill, unfortunate or careless. There is a

frightful leakage in our Protestant churches because of this failure of the churches to care for their own. Many of our churches are enthusiastically active in seeking to enroll new members but inexcusably careless of those whom they have persuaded to join them. It is hard to explain this keener interest in the outsider than in the members of the household. If the local churches kept a closer watch on the lives of their members there would be many less lapses and a much higher standard of life within the church.

Every church should maintain a parish register which should be in the custody of the most careful, painstaking member who has a gift for details. This register should give all the facts relative to the different members, their names when received and when changed, their residences and places of business or occupation, their telephone numbers, the names of their children and their relation to the church. The keeper of this record holds a position of great responsibility and should be honored for the work he does. This register will form the basis of the parish organization.

Every member and attendant should, whenever possible, be assigned a definite sitting in the house of worship and a record of attendance or absence kept for every Sabbath. On

Sunday noon or Monday morning at the latest the list of absences should be carefully studied and on Sunday afternoon or early in the week all the absentees who can not be satisfactorily accounted for should be communicated with either by telephone or by visitation by the parish committee. True, this will entail much work but it will furnish an opportunity for using in a real and valuable service, a large number of the members of the church. The church that will adopt such a system as this will have no complaint about not being able to find work for its members.

This system will keep the church in touch with all its people, will acquaint it at an early moment with all cases of sickness and misfortune and enable it to minister at a moment when its services will be most appreciated. Such a system will save to the church many who may be otherwise lost because of inattention at a serious moment. The average church loses by exclusion and erasure half as many as it receives by profession year by year. If it removed others who are really dead but who are retained for reasons of policy, the percentage of loss would be very much greater. When special revival seasons occur and large accessions are made the final losses are found to be almost as large as the gains. The proper

care would save large numbers of these to efficient Christian service. The plan may seem difficult and complicated to some but it will not appear so to a church that is really seeking for efficiency.

One of the facts which lies at the root of much of this inefficiency is that the ordinary church expects all its work to be done by one man. They engage a minister and make him responsible for all the work of the church. In some sections of the country they still speak of "hiring a minister," and in these churches the minister is in a real sense the "hired man," the man of all work and all jobs. Our attitude toward the minister much resembles the attitude of the ordinary American at a ball game. He goes in, pays his money, selects a comfortable seat and then proceeds to tell the players how to play the game. He gets his money's worth by watching the other fellow work under a storm of advice and criticism. When the player does not play just as it seems to him from the stand he should, he calls him a fool and tells him to go back to the bench. That is not an untrue picture of the way many of our church members act toward their minister, their "hired man."

In attending a concert some time ago at which a ladies' orchestra was playing I noticed

that the leader's right arm was very much larger than her left. On inquiring I learned that for years during many hours each day the woman had swung the baton in her right hand while conducting the orchestra and had held her left arm behind her back. The right arm under constant use was over-developed while the left arm from lack of use was undeveloped and undersized.

The church, which is the body of Christ, has two arms, two ministries, the clerical and the lay. In the ordinary church the clerical ministry is overworked while the lay ministry is underworked and underdeveloped. If the church is to fill its place in the modern world and render to the world the service which it needs, it will require both of these ministries and require that both of them shall be well developed and adequate to their task. It is utterly out of the question to expect that the minister can do all the work that is required in the modern church. He can do only a small part of it if he does it as he should. The rest must be done by the lay members and their part is quite as important as is his. This idea needs to grip the modern church if it is to become efficient. We shall devote the next chapter to this subject. In noting here the cures for our present ills we call special

attention to this matter. In nearly all our churches we greatly need the development of this lay ministry. When the laymen are once marshaled to the task of the church many of the ills from which it now suffers will be cured.

That progress is being made in this direction no one will question. The Laymen's Missionary Movement, organized primarily to interest men in foreign missions has had the larger result of quickening the interest of men in all the activities of the church and has enlisted thousands in definite service.

The church is becoming in a real and new sense "a household of faith." When we read carefully the conditions that obtained in the early church we are impressed with the fact that the believers had a deep sense of brotherhood in Christ. Their daily relationships with each other carried a personal ministry to every needy brother or sister. Paul often exhorted the members of the churches to serve one another and we cannot forget his words, "But the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." And again, "We know that we

have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren."

We need to develop the sense of the household in the modern church, to create such an attitude of the members toward each other that they shall feel that they are knit together with the ties of brotherhood. In such a church the members will sustain a beautiful relation toward each other and they will make a deep impression upon the world. This relation is beautifully illustrated in a certain church in the East. Here it is the custom for every Sunday School class in turn to visit the aged and shut-ins regularly each Sunday, taking with them flowers or some other token of love. On the one hand the shut-ins are kept in close personal relation with the church and are bound to it with ties of love by reason of this frequent ministry. On the other hand, the young people are taught lessons of respect, sympathy and the value of personal ministry. It is not strange that this church is unusually progressive and prosperous in all lines of world-wide activity and service.

I was once entertained over night in a western state, in a home where there were thirteen children. Five men were assigned to that family for entertainment during a convention. There were twenty in all to sit down

at the breakfast table. The first morning the numerous household was summoned by a bell and gathering about the table we were assigned our places. When all were seemingly seated there was one vacant place. The mother glanced around the table and asked, "Where is Billy?" When no one answered she added, "Mary, please go and find Billy. We will wait until you come back." We all waited and soon Mary came in with ten-year-old Billy who looked as if he had just jumped into his clothes. As breakfast began his mother said quietly, "You see, Billy, you kept us all waiting as we could not begin without you." That was a real home, a well-ordered household where all were united in one fellowship and lived in a common life. This is the condition which should obtain in every local church. The world would watch such a church and exclaim, "See how these Christians love one another." Such a church would have a mighty influence on the world.

As a fourth suggestion for making the church efficient, we should attempt to develop it as a militant church. Getting a vision of its great world mission and firing its members with a passion to establish the Kingdom throughout the world, it should marshal all its forces for a great world conquest. Nothing

will make the church more efficient in its work at home than to attack the world problem with vigor and power.

The most ardent defender could scarcely claim that the average church is really missionary at heart. The facts are against it. Not more than one-third the membership of the ordinary church are giving for world-wide missions. There is little or no interest in the missionary opportunities that lie at their door. How many of our members, for example, are seriously concerning themselves about the great numbers of foreign-speaking people who are crowding about our very doors? The only concern is lest these people dispossess them of their field. Professor Ward of Boston University, relates the story of a church which conducted a mission for the Chinese in the basement of their edifice. At the quarterly conference when the district superintendent came to receive the reports for the quarter no mention was made of the Chinese work. He therefore called for the report. "Oh," they replied, "the Chinamen are dirty and brought bed-bugs into our building so we have turned them out." "Well," commented the superintendent with as much truth as sarcasm, "when you turned out the Chinament with the bed-bugs you turned out the

only live things in your church." In many a so-called Christian church the poor, the laboring class and the foreign-speaking people are scarcely welcome. The missionary message is much more popular than it was a decade ago, but there are still too many ministers and far too many congregations that want but little of the world story for fear it will interfere with the support of their own institution. Very few churches as yet spend as much for the world enterprises as they do for the maintenance of their own church plant and work. In the great majority of cases four times as much is spent for local services as to apprise a sin-stricken world of its Saviour. Failure to give the gospel to the whole world impoverishes the church that withholds the message and forever prevents its development as an efficient institution in its own neighborhood.

If we can once impart to the church our Lord's vision of the Kingdom and inspire in their hearts something of the passion which burned in the hearts of the early disciples we shall have created an organization that must be efficient. The shortest and quickest road to the development of an effective church is to fire it with a burning passion for world-wide missions.

III

LEADERSHIP

THE problem of the church is the problem of a man. Given the right man almost any church can be led to success. The truth of this principle has been demonstrated in every other department of modern life. There can be no question of its application to the church. There are illustrations on every hand of churches which have lain dormant and useless for years but under the inspiration of the right leader have been awakened into life and marked activity. On the other hand there are churches that have seemed to be possessed of remarkable spiritual power which under an unfortunate leadership have almost entirely disappeared. The world of commerce and business is saying, "Give us the right man and we can solve any problem."

The call of the church is for an adequately prepared and capable leadership. We do not overlook the fact that in the past most valuable service has been rendered the church by

both ministers and laymen whose training has not been that of the schools, but we assert with great conviction that however much the church may have prospered under such leadership in the past the time has now come when this leadership must pass into the hands of men thoroughly trained for their work. The demands of this new day are for a leadership that is thoroughly equipped for the exacting tasks of the modern church. There will still be a place in the work of the Kingdom for men who have not had the thorough preparation, but leadership must pass into the hands of trained men. This principle must apply both to the ordained and the unordained ministry of the church.

The New Testament recognizes diversities of gifts in the ministry of the church. Paul sets this forth very clearly in his letter to the Corinthians.

"Now there are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit. The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another dis-

cerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. . . . Covet earnestly the best gifts."

This diversity of ministry has not always been recognized. In fact it has seldom been recognized. The early church noted its necessity and appointed others than the apostles to fulfill part of the ministry of the church. It was perfectly clear to them that their teachers were unable to fill the whole ministry demanded of the church and for the sake of efficiency divided responsibility and created a lay ministry. In this way the efficiency of the church was greatly increased. The Puritans in New England recognized this same fact for they had two orders of ministers, the pastors and the teachers. When their churches were very small they provided these two officers.

The modern church has forgotten the importance of this distinction and has almost universally placed the entire ministry of the church in the hands of one man. Whether on the principle of economy or from some other necessity, or more often from sheer failure to recognize its necessity most modern churches

have made one man responsible for the entire task. This has resulted not only in placing on the shoulders of one man more than he can possibly do, but it has detracted very materially from the development of the entire church. The modern church needs to revert to the pattern of its original type.

The modern church needs an official ministry trained for leadership in this modern day. The church today faces a task and conditions that are entirely different from those which faced the church a half century ago. Its ministry therefore requires a training that is different from that which the ministry of a half century ago received and that is adapted to the conditions of the present hour. It must be acknowledged however that the training of the ministry has not been greatly modified in that entire period. True, some new subjects have been introduced, such as psychology, religious education and pedagogy but the general character of training is essentially that which was given to ministers who were working in an entirely different world. The educational process needs to be modified in many important respects and rearranged from the point of view of the needs of the modern world and the mission of the modern church.

Especially does variation need to be intro-

duced in the training of the minister. Today all ministers are trained practically alike and yet they are to undertake tasks that are widely variant. One minister will go to a city church, another to a village or country district. One will devote himself to the home mission field in the West and another to the mission field in the Orient. What conceivable reason is there, except tradition, for giving all these men the same training when they have such different tasks to face? We do not train our engineers that way. While the fundamental training for all engineers is essentially the same, yet at an early stage each student determines which line of the profession he wishes to follow and his training is directed with that particular end in view. We can not have experts in any other way. Why should the training of our ministers be essentially different? At an early stage in their training every class should be given a thorough course dealing with the needs of the various fields of the church, urban, rural, foreign, etc., and the students should elect the field for which they desire to prepare themselves. Their courses should then be determined by their elections. The student who is planning to go to the foreign field should have opportunity at a very early stage in his preparation to specialize for

the particular work which he intends to do. Likewise the man who intends to devote himself to rural work needs special preparation for his difficult task. One reason why so many of our rural churches have declined is that they have had to accept as pastors young men who have used them merely as stepping-stones to town or city churches or, on the other hand, men whose equipment has been so poor that they have been unable to maintain themselves in the leadership of the supposedly more desirable fields. The rural field is worthy of the best ministers especially trained for their peculiar tasks. The churches should demand of their schools this variation in education.

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The modern minister is the manager of a plant and as such he should have some training in the management of men and of organizations. In other words he needs something of a business training. When he enters on his field he must know how to organize the people of his parish into working units and to assign to each the particular tasks for which they are best adapted. It is very generally said that one difficulty with the modern church is that there is not work enough to keep the members engaged in tasks that are worth while. Any student of modern society knows that this can not be true. The real difficulty

is that the modern church lacks leaders who know how to organize the forces and assign to each their tasks. There is more work than can possibly be done by the church today. There is a mind to work on the part of many members, more than the church realizes. What is needed is some one to marshal the forces and set them to work. A thorough training in the methods of efficiency would be of the greatest assistance to the modern minister.

In a certain large city the local churches requested the commercial organization of the city to make a survey of their work from the point of view of commercial efficiency. The report stated among many other things as follows: "You have the greatest proposition on earth, the marketing of spiritual understanding; but you are not acquainted with your stock and haven't a selling talk. If you knew your goods, and had the gift of presenting them to mankind, your churches would have overflow meetings."

In a prosperous country field a man with seminary training was at work with a local church. Conditions were crude, salary was meager and results almost nothing. There came into the same neighborhood a young man who had been trained in one of the

schools of the Young Men's Christian Association. He organized the same people with whom the minister worked and set them all at their tasks. The community took on new life and became active and vigorous. They willingly paid the man twice the salary which they grudgingly gave the minister. Why were two community leaders needed in this same district? Why should not the minister have been trained to lead those people and thus center all their activities about the Christian church? This preparation for the organization and direction of men ought to be a part of the training of every modern minister.

This training of the modern minister will enable him to organize the forces of his church, shift onto other shoulders many of the burdens which he is unnecessarily bearing, train groups of his people for active lay leadership and multiply the efficiency of his church in the local community and the world.

If the Christian church is to meet the opportunities and the demands of this new day we must develop to a much higher degree of efficiency the lay leadership of the church. The tasks are simply beyond the accomplishment of the church if it insists upon placing the responsibility upon the ministry alone. It is beyond the power of any one man or any

small group of men. The task is so large that it requires the active participation of every capable member of the church. And the ideal which we must hold before ourselves is the training and development of these lay forces into active efficient agents.

The professional and lay leaders of the church should be related as are the doctor and the trained nurse. The doctor is in control of the case but the nurse is trained and competent within her sphere, and the successful outcome of the case depends quite as much upon her as upon him. There will be no conflict between the minister and the helpers but together they will form a highly efficient organization.

But if this lay service is to be efficient the lay workers must be trained for their tasks. Much of the lay service in the church today is sorely inefficient simply because it is untrained. The next forward step in the development of the church must be the adequate training of the lay workers. For this task the minister must be responsible and he must be prepared by adequate training in pedagogy to develop this lay leadership. It will be necessary for the minister to decline to give his attention to many of the demands that are made upon him, that he may have the time

and vigor to train his people. When these lay leaders have been developed they will multiply his usefulness in the church and community.

The church has depended altogether too long upon untrained and inefficient lay leadership and hence the idea has gained almost universal recognition that such leadership must of necessity be inefficient. This condition can be corrected and must be. The minister should conduct classes among his people, including the officers and prominent members in the church, in all the branches of the church activity. It ought to be possible to enlist all the best people of the church in such training if the minister tactfully presents the opportunities of the church and the possibilities within her reach if she can have adequate forces at her command. It will doubtless be necessary in some conservative churches to limit this training to the young people, but the patient pastor who is building for tomorrow will remember that his young people soon become the active factors in the church life and he will not have to wait long before he has an adequate force of trained followers. It seems to us that the most necessary thing in the church today is this carefully planned, extensive and thorough education of the

people. It ought to include every activity of the church, and should be prolonged over several years. In fact there should never be a time in the life of an ordinary church when this process of training is not going on. As soon as new members are received, and often long before they are received, this process should begin and it should be carried on with each new member until he is adequately qualified to fill some definite place of usefulness in the church. This phase of the minister's work will be second only to his public presentation of the Gospel message. The general adoption of this plan would revolutionize the church in America in one generation.

Let us note some of the opportunities for lay leadership in the modern church. There is first of all the teaching ministry of the church. The average pupil in the public school spends about 1200 hours during a period of six years under a trained teacher in acquiring a knowledge of simple arithmetic. The scholar in the average Bible School receives less than 240 hours of instruction in the Bible during the same period. How essential is it therefore that the teacher in the Bible should be thoroughly competent. Yet what percentage of teachers in our Bible schools could be accounted competent? How often is the

religious training of the receptive young minds placed in the hands of immature, untrained and often ignorant young people! There has been a distinct advance in this particular direction in the past few years. Many churches have organized more or less thorough courses of teacher training. But the need of further advance is still very marked. There are untold possibilities within the reach of the church if it can have an adequate corps of trained teachers.

This teaching function of the church should not be confined to the work of the Sunday School in the way of Bible instruction. This is practically all the church is giving now. But the church must expand its function as teacher, as we have already suggested, and give all the members of the church a thorough training in all the fundamentals of the Christian life, faith, history and service. The church should in a real sense become a school, as it was at the beginning. In this way only can an efficient church be built up. This work of instruction and training should belong not to the minister only, but to men and women who have been especially trained by him for such service. Here is an opportunity for a large amount of specialized service. Here is a place for many strong laymen and laywomen

who are seeking service that will be worthy of the best they have to give.

The ministry of evangelism should belong also to the laymen to a much larger extent that it does now. We are told that in the New Testament times the Christians who were scattered abroad went everywhere telling the story of their experience of the grace of God. The days of the most rapid expansion of the church have always been those when the Christians themselves were earnestly giving their personal testimony to the experience which they possessed. In these days unfortunately the presentation of the Gospel message is left very largely to the message of the minister from the pulpit. In our judgment this is the main reason why converts are not being multiplied more rapidly. If we could reincarnate in the hearts of Christian laymen the passion for relating their experiences of the grace of God the church would grow by leaps and bounds. This is perhaps the weakest point in the ministry of the modern church. We need in every community a group of earnest, devoted men and women who are willing to accept this as their part of the King's business.

But this work can not be left to untrained people. It is delicate business and can be

undertaken successfully only by those who understand human nature and how to reach the hearts of men. We need therefore a band of trained men and women for this task. If we can once secure such a group they will soon become the joy of the whole church. We can not begin the training of such groups any too soon for the good of the American church.

The missionary activities of the church also furnish a large field for the services of trained laymen. While the church has been at this missionary business for many years, the possibilities of the field have not yet been touched. The ignorance of the ordinary church member about the larger interests of the Kingdom, the work which is being done by his own church and other Christian churches, is most pitiful indeed. The task of informing and interesting the ordinary member in these most important matters seems well nigh impossible. That is because the work has had to be done by so few people. We shall never permeate the church with the Kingdom spirit until we have groups of trained lay workers whose hearts are on fire with the passion of the Kingdom and who are able intelligently to interpret the Kingdom interests to the church. We need in every church a group of laymen who will make

themselves thoroughly acquainted with all the great interests of the church in the mission fields and assume as their part of the work the permeation of the church with the intelligence of the Kingdom enterprise. The field here is simply unlimited and the importance of the work is beyond all expression.

There is also the financial department of the church which calls for the service of trained laymen. Those who are at all acquainted with the deplorable financial conditions which obtain in a great many churches, if not the majority, including those with strong bodies of laymen within their membership, know how unpardonable and disgraceful the condition is. It is beyond understanding how laymen of large business interests can permit such conditions to obtain in their own churches. It is a fearful reflection on their interest in the church and their common business sagacity.

We need in all our churches a group of men who will consent to make church finance a special duty and devote themselves to the management of this department of the church. There is now a real science of church finance which is adaptable to any kind of a church and the men who assume responsibility in this department should make themselves masters

of this science.* If they will do this we can see a revolution in church finance within a short time and nothing would tend more to hasten the coming of the Kingdom than the adoption of honorable and efficient standards in the financing of the churches. Here is a great call to masters of finance to use their God-given talents in a task worth while.

The Christian church needs a new standard for its officers. We could scarcely claim that the official positions in the church are usually filled with efficient and devoted men and women. Too often these positions are given for traditional or family reasons. Too often men hold on to positions year after year long after they have ceased to be intensely interested or efficient. In many churches the officers take their responsibilities lightly and minister in them so as to be seen of men.

We need a new standard. The church must put such a high premium on its official positions that men will regard it not only an honor but a responsibility to hold them. The church should demand such a high degree of service that men will consent to hold these positions only when they are willing to give their first time and thought to the discharge

* See "Church Finance" by F. A. Agar, also "Modern Church Finance" by A. F. McGarrah.

of these duties. By putting this high appreciation upon its official positions the church will raise the whole standard of its life and ministry and attract to its service the finest spirits of the community. The fields of usefulness for such men are limitless and the church will greatly enhance its position and power in the world when it has recognized the necessity for this twofold ministry, the trained professional leader and the devoted trained layman. The trained layman will be produced by a thoroughly trained ministry. Next to the actual preaching of the Word there is no higher service for a minister to render to a church than to produce from it capable and devoted men and women for leadership in the church.

IV.

A CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAM

EVERY church that would attain success must have a well-defined program of activity. This has always been essential to any marked degree of success, but it is especially essential in this present day of highly diversified activities. This program should be based on a thorough and careful survey of the entire situation facing the church. Upon the basis of the results secured a program should be worked out which will embrace all the factors in the case and which will include all the activities in which the church should be engaged. When the program has been outlined by those who are in the best position to measure the situation it should be presented to the entire church and an effort made to enlist every member of the church in some of the activities outlined.

The adoption of such program will insure certain very important things. The church will be brought face to face with its entire

task. No important obligation will be overlooked, but each will find its own place of relative value. More important still, there will be an opportunity of enlisting every member of the church in some definite part of the church activities and it will be possible to keep careful record of what contribution each member is making to the life of the church.

We desire in this chapter to suggest a program for a modern church. No two organizations are just alike and therefore we can not lay down a program that will fit every case. And yet we shall attempt to put into this program the activities which ought to characterize most churches of medium size in an ordinary community. This program is subject to expansion or contraction though most churches are inclined to contract the line of their activities far beyond the necessities of the situation.

1. An Inventory.

An inventory should be made first of all by a committee that is conversant with the assets of the church. This inventory should reveal all the facts in the case, and to be of value must be made with great care and must be all inclusive.

It should cover the *plant*, including the

church building, the parsonage and parish house and should reveal the exact condition of every part of the property, the repairs or improvements which need to be made, the use to which each part is put, the space which is not occupied, the changes that are necessary to bring the plant up to the highest standard of efficiency; the accessories, including organ, pianos, Bibles, hymn books, library books, etc.: the *membership,* the men, women children, with their addresses, their resources, their particular interests, their church activities: the *parish,* listing all non-members with addresses and divided into classes such as attendants, contributors, Sunday School scholars, etc.

The inventory should include all the activities which the church is carrying on with the names of those who are engaged in each particular line. A list should be made which will indicate those who are engaged in one or more different lines of work and especially of those who are occupying more than one office. This will reveal to most churches what a large number of official positions are held by a few members and what a large number of members are doing nothing. The inventory should include all the meetings of the church and its organizations with their attendance, their character and their results.

If this inventory is made carefully it will bring to light many facts of which the church has been entirely ignorant. Churches that have supposed that they knew themselves will discover how ignorant they were of their own situation. This inventory will give the basis for the formation of a constructive program and without it no complete or satisfactory program can be made.

2. A Survey.

Following the inventory a survey should be made of the field of the church. This will enable the church to understand its field and the task which it should attempt to handle. It would be of the greatest possible value if previous to this survey of an individual church all the churches of the city could reach an agreement whereby the entire city could be districted and divided among the various churches. In this way each church will have a distinct territory for which it is directly responsible and thus insure the care of the entire city. Under the ordinary conditions obtaining in most cities there are great districts which are uncared for simply because there is no cooperative effort. No one church can minister to an entire city. It does not have the forces sufficient for the task and the

task belongs to all the churches in common. We shall never be able to save the modern city until the churches are ready for this co-operative work for the entire community.

When the churches of the city have agreed upon this districting and the lines have been carefully drawn, then the individual church should make a careful study of the field which has been assigned to it which will include of course the territory which is adjacent to the church itself. It may include other sections of the city but should of course include the adjacent territory.

This survey should reveal all the essential facts about the people who are residing within the district, their church relations, their nationalities, their various affiliations. It should furnish information as to Sunday School attendance on the part of every child, the connection of men with men's classes or brotherhoods. It should indicate the social and moral conditions of the community, the need for various kinds of ministration, etc. In short, this survey should enable a church to know its entire field intimately. Many churches have been surprised by the revelations of such a survey. They have supposed that they knew their district but have discovered conditions of which they have

never dreamed and yet which call for attention on the part of the church. No church is able to discharge its entire responsibility to the city until it does possess this information. It is working very largely in the dark until the survey is made.

These suggestions regarding the city church apply equally well to the village and country church. These churches are very apt to be sure that they know their community only to discover most important information of which they were entirely ignorant. The need of this community survey is quite as important in the country districts as anywhere. We have discovered in such surveys many families which have not been inside a church for years but what is more serious, which have never received a call from a minister or member of a church for over twenty years. The conditions which obtain in the rural districts of some parts of the country are a fearful reflection upon the churches. These seem to be satisfied to minister week by week to the little group of people who assemble for worship, entirely forgetting that the ministry of the church is not to itself but to the world.

Such surveys as these have now been made by many churches and have been the means of quickening the churches to a new sense

of responsibility and to a new and larger ministry to the world. There is not a church of any character located anywhere which would not profit by such a survey if it were carefully and thoroughly made.

3. A Plan of Action.

On the basis of the Inventory of the church and the Survey of the field the church should determine a plan of campaign which shall include all the activities which are necessary to minister to all the needs of the field and which shall enlist the active service and cooperation of every member of the church. The extent of the plan of activities will vary widely, of course, with the size of the field and its character and also with the size and character of the church. But just so far as possible each church should endeavor to meet all the needs of its own territory as disclosed by the survey. The plan must in every church include certain essential elements, but other elements will be added as circumstances demand. We shall indicate here some of the more important activities which should enter into the plan of every church.

4. A Ministry of Prayer.

The fundamental element in this plan should without question be prayer. The prayer-life

of the church needs organization. There can be no question but that in the ordinary church prayer has become an almost negligible quantity. It plays but a small part in the life of the majority of the people. To this fact can be traced the impotence of many of our churches. They can never prevail with any influence in the life of the world until prayer is restored to its proper place.

The church needs to give first and special attention to this first matter. It is in vain that the church will attempt to achieve any great end unless this vital situation can be remedied. The whole church needs to give its attention to this matter first of all. The prayer-life of the church should be thoroughly organized. Effort should be made to enlist every member in this part of the plan. Definite objects of intercession should be set before the church and every member. The church should concentrate its prayer on certain days for certain specific ends. This effort should be supplemented by regularly organized prayer groups which meet at stated times and pray for certain definite results which are included in the plan for which the church is definitely working.

It seems almost superfluous to point out that prayer is essential to any success in the

ministry of the church. But most people would be astounded if they knew how completely true prayer has disappeared from the life of the church. Its restoration is essential to any progress.

5. A Fellowship Visitation.

The church should organize a system of parish visitation to be carried out at regular stated intervals. This should be organized on practically the same plan as the Every-Member Canvass. The purpose however is not to secure money but to bind the members of the church and the parish more closely to the church through the ministry of personal fellowship. This may well be carried out on a Sunday afternoon and should be held at least once every quarter. Through proper systematization the visitors will be changed each quarter, or as often as the membership of the church will permit.

The Fellowship Visitation is a new project in church life. It followed upon the introduction of the Every-Member Canvass, the favorable results of which have been noted in thousands of churches. The Fellowship Visitation has now become a regular feature of the life of many modern churches which report most remarkable results. The bonds

of church fellowship have been greatly strengthened and many have been won back to active interest and participation in the church life and work. There is no church which could not organize such a visitation and profit greatly from it.

6. A Program of Evangelism.

It is the duty of the church to present constantly the Gospel message and invite men to accept it but the church should set apart a definite period each year when it will focus the attention of the whole church and community upon this part of its mission. This does not mean that it must follow any hard and fast method. It may suit the method to the conditions which will vary from year to year. Without doubt most churches will find periods when it will seem best to hold a series of special meetings, either with an evangelist or with the regular ministry of the church.

But even more important is the restoration of the apostolic method of evangelization. A program should be worked out in each church whereby every member is assigned a definite part in this work and is expected to win some new converts to the faith and to the church. This plan has been adopted in many churches at the beginning of the season and a definite

effort has been made to win a certain number of converts before the close of the season's work. The results have surprised the churches themselves which have held no special meetings nor brought in an evangelist, but have depended upon the activity of the majority of the people to secure results.

As a part of this program definite prayer lists should be made out and given to different groups of people who are willing to participate in this ministry. Some time during the period a few days should be set apart definitely to an evangelistic visitation similar to the fellowship visitation, when, going two by two, the members will seek definitely to win new adherents to the faith. This plan of personal evangelism has been worked out to include a whole city with a large number of churches. The result has been the addition to the churches within a given period of a larger number of new members than have united with the churches of any city following the meetings of the most popular of the modern evangelists. Experience has proved that the possibilities of this method of propagating the faith, reintroduced from apostolic days, are simply limitless.

7. An Educational Program.

This should include a thorough modernization of the Bible school with the installation of the best proved methods and the enlistment as teachers and officers of those who are especially adapted to this service and who have been willing to take a thorough course of preparation for the work in the training classes of the church. An efficient church will be anxious at any cost to weed out incapable teachers and officers of its Bible school. It will recognize that efficiency must prevail here if nowhere else in the church.

This program will include classes for training teachers and officers of the church, for instructing new members in the fundamentals of the Christian faith, the principles of the denomination, the duties of church membership, the methods of church work, the missionary work of the church and the denomination at home and abroad.

A very definite part of the program should include a distinct effort to interest the young people of the church in securing a higher education, helping them to determine what particular kind of an education they should plan on, the best institutions to attend, and how to go to work to secure an education.

It should also include a course which will help them to decide on a life calling, drawing attention always to the opportunity for the investment of life in the service of the Kingdom.

This program should be organized early in the Fall and should extend throughout the year.

8. A Missionary Program.

The Christian church is rapidly awakening to a realization of the stupendous task which it has upon its hands and is attacking the problem with a vigor and enthusiasm which is most encouraging. The advance in this direction in the past ten years has been almost revolutionary. It is difficult to appreciate, looking back over a decade, how far and how rapidly the church has moved. There has never been another decade in the history of the modern church when progress has been made so rapidly. This has been due to the new vision given to laymen and ministers by the Laymen's Missionary Movement, to the new appreciation of the needs of the world by the organized mission study under the inspiration of the Missionary Education Movement, to the inspiration of many smaller movements growing out of these larger ones

which have spread their influence into the remotest parts of America.

This new spirit has resulted in a much more efficient organization of the local church for the propagation of the missionary movement. This is coming to be one of the most important departments of the entire church organization.

The missionary program should be in the hands of a missionary committee which should be composed of the strongest and most active members of the church. The chairmanship of this committee should not devolve upon the minister though he should be the inspiration of this entire missionary program. The readiness of the laymen to accept leadership in this work is one of the most encouraging signs in the modern church and the work should be placed on their shoulders.

The missionary committee will organize the entire church for missionary study. Mission study classes should be organized in the Fall for periods of eight or twelve weeks, to be followed by other classes immediately after Christmas. There are new text-books prepared for each new year which are intensely interesting. As many members of the church as possible should be gathered into these classes. Small discussion groups should be organized. These will appeal especially to the

men who will be glad to gather for a series of evenings of discussion regarding some of the modern world movements. These can be made intensely interesting. These may be substituted for the regular work of the men's classes or brotherhoods for limited periods during the Winter.

The missionary committee should make strenuous endeavor to get the church to reading missionary books. The books should be purchased by the church and the committee should arrange for their systematic circulation according to the methods of the former reading circles. At stated periods a public discussion of these books may be arranged for, following the period of reading when different persons properly qualified will outline the most important features of each book. These discussions may well be placed at the regular mid-week services of the church.

The missionary committee should organize the mission study in the Bible school. At least once each month there should be missionary instruction in the school. There are many charts and pictures with which the children may be interested.

There are many other helpful methods which any enterprising committee will discover and which should be introduced from time to

time. The work of this committee may easily become the most interesting in the whole church life.

9. The Expressional Program.

This program should be made one of the most important phases of the church life and should be in charge of a thoroughly competent and interested committee of people who believe that the church is in the world to minister to those who are outside its own fellowship. "None others need apply." There is no place for them in this department until they have imbibed the spirit of the Master who spent his life going about doing good.

This program will vary widely according to the local conditions but there are parts of it that are applicable everywhere. We enumerate here simply by way of suggestion some of the things which an ordinary church may do.

a. Testimony meetings in schoolhouses in the outlying districts. There is a great opportunity for work here. Our country districts are being neglected and many of the country people have no religious privileges. Such meetings can be organized and conducted regularly without the service of the minister. The churches in Wichita, Kansas, have organ-

ized this work in a most systematic way and information as to their plans is easily procurable.

b. Mission stations in the new sections of the city where no churches are yet established. Sunday schools may be profitably conducted in such places, with Sunday evening services and mid-week services, all conducted by the laymen of the church. Many of these stations will develop into strong churches. In Kansas City, Kansas, a series of such stations was opened by one of the denominations which could secure the services of some theological students and within ten years that denomination grew from the smallest to the largest in the city. There are great possibilities in the development of missions in the growing cities.

c. Cottage prayer meetings were introduced long ago. While they are not so popular as once, yet they can be made very useful, especially in connection with the development of some large movement.

d. Missions for the foreign-speaking people. The American church has not yet awakened to the importance of this new opportunity and obligation. The presence of these strangers is becoming one of the most serious phases of American life. They are pouring

in upon us in multitudes and are fast becoming assimilated with our civilization but they are not being introduced in any adequate way to our American Christianity. We need to multiply our work among them many-fold. It will not do to wait until our national missionary organizations can open stations with a regular missionary, nor is it at all necessary. Our churches should open work among these people in their own communities with classes for teaching them English, to which they respond very gladly, with classes for teaching the children sewing, etc., classes for the young women in cooking and the art of good housekeeping. When the confidence of the people is secured the church should follow these with classes in the Bible and the Protestant faith.

It is not at all necessary to await the coming of a trained missionary who speaks their tongue. Of course the work is much more efficient with his help, but a church that is determined to win these people and that has a band of loyal workers can work wonders among them long before the missionary arrives.

c. If the church has any laymen who are capable speakers a series of meetings in shops and on the street corners may be arranged. The time of the minister ought not to be ex-

acted for such work as this and it will be a most valuable experience for the men of the church. Occasionally the minister may be called upon to do his share of the speaking, but the brunt of the work should be borne by the business men. Such meetings have proven very valuable in many cities. In England street meetings are an important adjunct of the church services and could be made much more valuable in America.

f. In every city of any considerable size there are public institutions in which religious services should be conducted much more regularly, such as the old people's homes, the orphanages, the city homes, the jails, etc. No preachers are required for such services. Meetings conducted by young people, with their personal testimonies and with good music, will be much more acceptable.

g. In most cities there is a large amount of civic improvement work which should be undertaken by the young people of the church. Such work is intensely interesting to them and will be a most valuable experience. The church should encourage such work and plan for it regularly and systematically.

10. A Social Program.

Social activities should play a large part in

the program of any modern church. The prejudice against the social ministry of the church has been largely overcome. Most churches have come to recognize that they have a ministry to the whole life of their people and that they can not safely shift this responsibility to other shoulders. This is especially true in the cities where large numbers of young workers are congregated who hunger for some social life after the work of the day. If they do not find it under proper conditions, they will find it under other conditions. It is the business of the church to prevent this. The church in the city has just as great an obligation to help its young people find suitable social conditions as it has to preach the gospel to them. It is of little use to preach to them if they have to live six days of the week under conditions that undermine their spiritual health.

The modern church has been driven by the conditions of modern life to minister to this social instinct and this social ministry is becoming more and more pressing as our cities enlarge. The church must not take advantage of this situation to make money for itself. So far as possible all the social ministry of the church should be given gratuitously to its people. A church that is compelled to devote

a large amount of time and energy to this social ministry may make a small charge sufficient to cover the mere cost but as a rule the church should make provision for this social ministry in its regular budget.

11. A Unified Church Budget.

Every successful church must make adequate provision for its financing. The outworn methods of church finance which have brought many churches to the brink of ruin and keep many churches in a constant state of indebtedness are rapidly passing away. Let no one hinder their departure. The business men of the church should give the same careful attention to the financing of their church as they do to their business. They should introduce into the church the same modern methods of efficiency that they are introducing into their own business. They should not tolerate in their church any false business principles and methods which they would taboo in their own business. When business men come to exercise the same acumen in the business affairs of their church that they do in their own private business the church will rise tremendously in the estimation of the world. Business men could do little for their church that would count for more than to give this

careful attention to the business affairs of their church.

Every church should have a unified budget divided into two distinct parts, one relating to church expenses and the other to the beneficence of the church. We may list the more important items in each part of the budget, not attemping to make the list inclusive for all churches.

Church Expenses	*Beneficence*
Salaries	Poor of the Church
Music	Home Missions
Light	Foreign Missions
Water	Women's Missions
Heat	State or Synodical
Sunday School	Freedmen
Women's Societies	Christian Education
Young People's Societies	Ministerial Education
Advertising	Ministerial Relief
Printing	Anti-Saloon Work
Repairs	City Missions
Contingent	Reserve for Exigencies

This entire budget should be put before every member of the church for his support. Every member should be expected to give to the entire budget or else be placed on the benevolence rolls of the Church. Every church should work assiduously at this task until every member is enrolled in one list or the

other, that of the givers or that of the receivers.

12. The Annual Every-Member Canvass.

It has come to be recognized in every modern church that an essential effort in the work of the church is the annual Every-Member Canvass for the funds of the church. This matter has been so thoroughly discussed and so carefully outlined in so many discussions of the subject that we shall not go into details here. We desire merely to add our emphatic commendation of this plan and to urge that it is essential to the proper financing of any church, large or small, urban or rural, independent or mission, English-speaking or foreign-speaking. There is not a single church in the nation of any denomination that should be excepted from this rule. For further information regarding the details of this plan we refer the reader to the author's book on "Church Finance" and to various other publications on this subject issued by denominational agencies and also by other publishers.

In this program for a modern church we have not attempted to include all phases of work which may properly characterize the activities of a Christian church in this day.

We have merely given some of the more important. We do not mean to indicate that in every church all these phases of work should be carried to the *n*th power. But it is our conviction that most of them should become characteristic of a modern church. We have not suggested visionary things. Every form of service which we have outlined has been worked successfully in many churches of varying characters. What has worked will work.

We urge every church to adopt a large plan of action that will include every line of activity which its field requires. Many churches are failing of their mission simply because they have no vision and have never attempted anything that is large. Let the churches of Christ get a large vision of the Kingdom and then let them attempt large things with a heroic faith, and the Kingdom of God will be advanced by long stages in this world.

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